Kodumanal Excavations – Kodumanam of Pathitrupathu, Noyyal River, Gem Beads & Iron Industry, Tamil-Brahmi, Megaliths & Roman Trade | TNPSC Notes

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Kodumanal is a village in **Erode district** on the northern bank of the **Noyyal river**, identified with **Kodumanam** of the Sangam work **Pathitrupathu**. Excavations by **Tamil University, Thanjavur (from 1985)**, Pondicherry University (2012) and the **Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology (in the late 1990s and again from 2020)** have shown that it was an early-historic **industrial and trade centre** – making **beads of beryl, quartz and other gemstones**, smelting **iron and steel**, writing in **Tamil-Brahmi** on pottery, burying its dead in **megalithic** graves and trading along the route to the Roman world.

தமிழில் படிக்க

These notes are written for TNPSC Group 1, 2/2A and 4 aspirants and are meant to be complete on this topic. Kodumanal is a core topic in the unit **History, Culture, Heritage and Socio-Political Movements of Tamil Nadu** (history of Tamil society and related archaeological discoveries, Sangam age) and also comes under **History, Culture of India and Indian National Movement** (Iron Age and megalithic cultures of South India, early historic trade). Its industries and trade link to **Geography of India** (rivers and minerals of Tamil Nadu), and the Sangam reference to Kodumanam is useful for **General Tamil** (Ettuthogai – Pathitrupathu). Read each section, then use the tables, the quick revision table and the key points at the end.

Location and Setting

- **Village and taluk:** Kodumanal, in **Perundurai taluk** of **Erode district**, western Tamil Nadu (the Kongu region).
- **River:** on the **northern bank of the Noyyal**, a tributary of the **Kaveri**. The Noyyal rises in the Vellingiri hills of the Western Ghats and flows east through the Coimbatore and Tiruppur region.
- **Distance:** about **40 km south-west of Erode** and about 15 km west of **Chennimalai**.
- **Two parts of the site:** a **habitation-cum-industrial area** near the river and **megalithic burial grounds**.
- **Trade route:** Kodumanal lies on the ancient route linking **Karur** (Vanji/Karuvur, the Chera capital) with the Chera port of **Muziris (Muchiri)** on the west coast.

Kodumanam in Sangam Literature

The modern village name Kodumanal is taken to be the ancient **Kodumanam** mentioned in **Pathitrupathu** (Patirruppattu), one of the eight anthologies (**Ettuthogai**) of Sangam literature. Pathitrupathu is devoted to the praise of **Chera kings**; of its ten decads (ten songs each), only the second to the ninth survive, that is, 80 songs.

- **Where it is mentioned:** Kodumanam appears in **song 74** of the eighth decad, sung by **Arisil Kizhar**, in the line "கொடுமணம் பட்ட வினைமாண் அருங்கலம்".

- **What the poem says:** Kodumanam is described as the place where **finely crafted, precious ornaments (arunkalam)** were made – a literary hint of the gem-and-bead industry that the spade later confirmed.
- **Why it matters:** Kodumanal is a good example of **literature and archaeology supporting each other**: a place-name in a Sangam poem was traced on the ground, and excavation proved it to be a craft and trade centre.

How the Site Came to Light

- **1961:** the megalithic burials at Kodumanal were first noticed and reported (an officer of the Archaeological Survey of India recorded the burial site).
- **Se. Rasu (S. Rasu):** a Tamil scholar and epigraphist who later served at **Tamil University, Thanjavur**, identified the village with the Kodumanam of Pathitrupathu and drew attention to its antiquities. His identification led to the systematic excavations that began in 1985.
- **Surface clues:** beads and potsherds turning up in the village fields drew attention to the site.

Excavation Phases at a Glance

Period	Agency	Led by	Main results
1961	Archaeological Survey of India (survey)	–	Megalithic burial site first reported
1985, 1986, 1989, 1990 (four seasons)	**Tamil University, Thanjavur** (Department of Epigraphy and Archaeology), with the University of Madras and the State Department of Archaeology	**Y. Subbarayalu**	Habitation and burial areas opened; bead-making, iron smelting, Tamil-Brahmi potsherds, megalithic graves
Late 1990s (1997–98 in one report; 1998 and 1999 in another)	Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology	–	Further trenches and graves
2012	**Pondicherry University** (Department of History)	**K. Rajan**	Industrial complex of about the 4th century BCE; 130 Tamil-Brahmi inscribed sherds; gem, shell-bangle, textile and iron-steel working
2020 and 2021	**Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology**	**J. Ranjith** (project director)	About 250 cairn circles identified; cist burials with pots and bowls; workshop, copper-smelting units, furnaces, beads, gold; large rubble-built well-like structure (2021)

Exam tip: the first systematic excavation (**1985**) was by **Tamil University, Thanjavur** – not by the ASI and not by Madurai Kamaraj University. The recent phase that began in **2020** is by the **Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology**.

Phase 1: Tamil University, Thanjavur (1985 onward)

- Tamil University, with the University of Madras and the Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology, excavated Kodumanal in **1985, 1986, 1989 and 1990**, under **Y. Subbarayalu**.
- Trenches were laid both in the **habitation mound** and in the **megalithic cemetery**.
- The digs revealed **iron smelting**, **bead-making**, pottery with **graffiti marks** and potsherds bearing **Tamil-Brahmi** writing.
- Finds included iron objects and thousands of beads.

Phase 2: State Department of Archaeology (late 1990s)

- The **Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology** excavated again in the late 1990s (reported as 1997–98 in one account and as 1998 and 1999 in another).
- One report records 15 trenches and three graves exposed in this phase.

Phase 3: Pondicherry University (2012)

- In **April–May 2012**, the Department of History of **Pondicherry University** excavated Kodumanal with **K. Rajan** as director. One aim was to fix the **age of Tamil-Brahmi**.
- Trenches in the habitation mound exposed an **industrial complex dated to about the 4th century BCE**, with evidence of **iron and steel**, **conch-shell bangles**, **textiles** and **beads** of semi-precious stones.
- **130 Tamil-Brahmi inscribed potsherds**, mostly carrying personal names, were recovered (see the section on inscriptions).

Phase 4: Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology (2020 onward)

- **2020:** the 2020 season, under project director **J. Ranjith**, began in late May 2020. Kodumanal was one of the sites in the State Department's 2019–20 excavation programme.
- **Burials:** about **250 cairn circles** were identified in the burial ground. Most contain chambered **cists** with three or four pots and bowls; one grave with three-chambered cists had ten pots and bowls.
- **Belief in afterlife:** pots and bowls, probably filled with grain, were placed with the dead – read as a sign of **belief in life after death**.
- **Habitation finds (2020):** house floors, a stone-masonry channel, furnace remains, copper-smelting units, a mud-walled workshop, beads, gold ornaments, punch-marked coins, terracotta objects and Tamil-Brahmi potsherds.
- **2021:** a new season in 2021 exposed iron-smelting units and a large **rubble-built square structure with steps**, interpreted as a **well** serving the workshops – stone working and iron smelting needed water close by.

Kodumanal as an Industrial Centre

The most important lesson of Kodumanal is that a Sangam-age village could be a **specialised craft centre** producing goods for distant markets. Excavators found raw material, half-finished and finished objects, waste and furnaces together – clear proof that goods were **made** here, not merely used.

Beads and gemstones

Material	Where the raw material came from	Point to remember
Beryl	Local – the Kangeyam area nearby had an ancient beryl mine	Beryl from this region was exported to the Roman world
Quartz (crystal)	Local – quartz was abundant near the site	Quartz beads and crystal waste are common finds
Sapphire	–	Shows skill in working very hard stone
Carnelian, **agate**	Carnelian is not found in Tamil Nadu – brought from western India	Proof of inland trade
Lapis lazuli	Not found in Tamil Nadu – from distant sources (Afghanistan is the classic source)	Proof of long-distance trade
Jasper, shell	Various	Shell bangles made in workshops

- Thousands of finished and unfinished beads, chips and waste flakes were found, showing every stage of bead-making.
- Beads made at Kodumanal were traded to other regions.

Iron and steel

- **Iron-smelting furnaces**, slag and iron objects have been found at Kodumanal.
- Kodumanal produced both **iron and steel**.
- Iron objects include swords and arrowheads.
- This archaeological evidence supports the many Sangam references to **blacksmiths** and iron weapons.

Other crafts

- **Copper smelting** – copper-smelting units were found in 2020.
- **Conch-shell bangles** – made in the workshops.
- **Textiles** – the 2012 excavation found evidence of textile production.
- **Gold** ornaments and pottery of black-and-red ware.

Tamil-Brahmi Inscriptions

Kodumanal is one of the most important sites for **Tamil-Brahmi** (also called **Tamili**), the earliest script used to write Tamil.

- **Number:** hundreds of inscribed potsherds have been found over the seasons – the 2012 season alone yielded **130** – one of the largest numbers from any early-historic site.
- **Content:** mostly **personal names** – for example **Samban**, **Sumanan** (a large pot reads "Samban Sumanan") and **Atan**.
- **North Indian names:** names such as **Visaki** are not Tamil but north Indian (Prakrit/Sanskrit), pointing to contact with people from **northern India**.

- **Graffiti:** besides writing, many sherds carry **graffiti marks** (non-script symbols) typical of megalithic pottery.
- **Who wrote:** because the names are scratched on everyday pots, the inscriptions show that writing was known to **ordinary people – craftsmen and traders**, not only to kings or monks.

The dating question

- K. Rajan and colleagues reported **scientific (radiometric) dates of about the 5th century BCE** from layers with inscribed sherds at **Porunthal** (near Palani) and **Kodumanal**, arguing that Tamil-Brahmi is earlier than Ashoka.
- Some scholars do not accept such early dates; the question is debated.
- Later, the Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology's **Keeladi** report (2019) proposed a **6th century BCE** date for Tamil-Brahmi. Remember: **Porunthal/Kodumanal – about 5th century BCE**; **Keeladi – 6th century BCE**.

Megalithic Burials

Megaliths are burials marked with large stones; in South India they belong to the **Iron Age** and continue into the early historic period. Kodumanal has a large megalithic burial ground with many cairn circles.

Burial type	Description
Cairn circle	A heap of stones (cairn) enclosed by a circle of boulders over the grave; about 250 identified in 2020
Cist burial	A box-like chamber of stone slabs; some graves have chambered cists
Urn burial	Bones or remains placed in a large pottery urn
Menhir	A tall standing stone erected as a memorial near the grave

- **Grave goods:** pots and bowls, iron weapons and beads.
- **Afterlife:** food and pots placed in the graves show **belief in life after death**.

Trade Links: Karur–Muziris Route and Rome

- **Route:** Kodumanal stood midway on the inland route from **Karur** (Chera capital) to **Muziris**, the Chera port; many scholars identify Muziris with **Pattanam** in Kerala. Goods also moved east to the Chola port of **Kaveripoompattinam (Puhar)**.
- **Roman finds at Kodumanal: Roman coins** and **rouletted ware** (a fine pottery associated with Indo-Roman trade).
- **Roman coins nearby:** hoards of Roman coins were found at **Vellalore** (Coimbatore), another village on the Noyyal route.
- **Beryl for Rome:** the Kangeyam area nearby had an ancient beryl mine whose beryl was exported to the Roman empire; Kodumanal's bead workshops worked the same stone.
- **Inland trade:** carnelian and agate from western India and lapis lazuli from beyond India show that Kodumanal traded within India as well.
- **Coins:** punch-marked coins have also been found.

Dating and Cultural Periods

- Two broad periods are recognised: a **megalithic (Iron Age)** phase and an **early historic** phase.

- The main occupation is usually dated from about the **5th century BCE to the 1st century BCE**; Kodumanal is often described as having flourished as an industrial and trade centre **about 2,300 years ago**.

Where to See the Finds

- Antiquities from the Kodumanal excavations, including urns and megalithic objects, are displayed at the **Government Museum, Erode**.

Kodumanal and Other Archaeological Sites of Tamil Nadu

Site	District	River	Known for
Kodumanal	Erode	Noyyal	Gem-bead and iron industry; Tamil-Brahmi sherds; megaliths; Kodumanam of Pathitrupathu
Keeladi	Sivaganga	Vaigai	Urban settlement of the Sangam age; 6th century BCE date proposed for Tamil-Brahmi
Adichanallur	Thoothukudi	Thamirabarani	Urn burials
Porunthal	Dindigul (near Palani)	–	Paddy dated to about 490 BCE; Tamil-Brahmi
Vellalore	Coimbatore	Noyyal	Roman coin hoards
Karur	Karur	Amaravathi	Chera capital (Vanji/Karuvur); coins
Arikamedu	Puducherry	–	Indo-Roman trading station (excavated by Mortimer Wheeler, 1945)

Key People

Person	Role
Se. Rasu	Tamil scholar and epigraphist, later at Tamil University, Thanjavur; identified Kodumanal with the Kodumanam of Pathitrupathu
Y. Subbarayalu	Directed the Tamil University excavations (1985 onward)
K. Rajan	Directed the Pondicherry University excavation (2012); reported early scientific dates for Tamil-Brahmi
J. Ranjith	Project director of the State Department of Archaeology excavations from 2020
Arisil Kizhar	Sangam poet of the eighth decad of Pathitrupathu, whose song 74 mentions Kodumanam

Significance of Kodumanal

- **Literature confirmed:** the Kodumanam of Pathitrupathu was found to be a real craft and trade centre.

- **Industrial village:** one of the clearest early-historic examples in South India of a settlement specialising in **beads, iron-steel, copper, shell and textiles**.
- **Literacy:** hundreds of Tamil-Brahmi sherds show **wide literacy** among common people in the Sangam age.
- **Trade:** evidence of links with western India, the far north-west and the Roman world, along the Karur–Muziris route.
- **Megalith to early history:** megalithic burials and an early historic industrial settlement at the same place show the transition from the **Iron Age** to the **early historic (Sangam)** period.
- **Kongu region:** shows that early urban-industrial growth was not limited to the river deltas and ports but extended to the interior Kongu region.

Writing Mains Answers on Kodumanal (Group 1 / Group 2)

Descriptive papers may ask about Kodumanal directly or as an example in answers on Sangam-age economy, trade or archaeology. Build your answer around these points.

Kodumanal as an industrial and trade centre of the Sangam age (about 150–250 words)

- **Introduction:** Erode district, northern bank of the Noyyal; Kodumanam of Pathitrupathu; flourished about 2,300 years ago.
- **Excavations:** Tamil University, Thanjavur (1985 onward, Y. Subbarayalu); Pondicherry University (2012, K. Rajan); TN State Department of Archaeology (from 2020, J. Ranjith).
- **Industries:** beads of beryl, quartz, sapphire, carnelian, agate, lapis lazuli; iron-smelting furnaces and steel; copper; shell bangles; textiles.
- **Trade:** on the Karur–Muziris route; Roman coins and rouletted ware; carnelian from western India and lapis lazuli from far away.
- **Society:** Tamil-Brahmi personal names on pots show literacy among craftsmen and traders; north Indian (Prakrit/Sanskrit) names such as Visaki show contact with the north.
- **Conclusion:** Kodumanal proves that the Sangam economy had specialised craft centres in the interior, linked to inland and overseas trade.

Contribution of Kodumanal to the study of Tamil-Brahmi (about 150 words)

- Hundreds of inscribed potsherds (130 in the 2012 season alone) – among the largest numbers from any site.
- Personal names (Samban, Sumanan, Atan) and north Indian names (Visaki).
- Writing by common people, not only in royal or religious records.
- Scientific dates reported by K. Rajan from Kodumanal and Porunthal – about the 5th century BCE; debated; Keeladi (2019) proposed 6th century BCE.
- Conclusion: Kodumanal is central to the debate on the antiquity of Tamil writing.

Megalithic burials of Kodumanal (about 100 words)

- Types: cairn circles (about 250 identified in 2020), cists, urn burials, menhirs.
- Grave goods: pots and bowls, iron weapons, beads.
- Several burial types at one site.
- Pots of grain point to belief in an afterlife.

Practice: Match the Following

Item	Match
Kodumanal	Erode district, Noyyal river
Kodumanam	Ancient name mentioned in Pathitrupathu
Tamil University, Thanjavur	First systematic excavation, 1985
Y. Subbarayalu	Director of the Tamil University seasons
K. Rajan	Pondicherry University excavation, 2012
J. Ranjith	State Department of Archaeology excavation, 2020
Kangeyam area	Ancient beryl mine
Vellalore	Roman coin hoards on the Noyyal route
Government Museum, Erode	Displays Kodumanal antiquities

Common Mistakes to Avoid

- **District:** Kodumanal is in **Erode** district (Perundurai taluk) – not Coimbatore, Karur or Dindigul. Porunthal is in Dindigul; Keeladi in Sivaganga; Adichanallur in Thoothukudi.
- **River: Noyyal** (tributary of the Kaveri) – not the Vaigai (Keeladi), Thamirabarani (Adichanallur) or Amaravathi (Karur).
- **First excavator: Tamil University, Thanjavur** (1985), not the ASI.
- **Kodumanal vs Kodumanam:** Kodumanal is the modern village; **Kodumanam** is the Sangam name in **Pathitrupathu** (not Pattinappalai or Maduraikkanchi).
- **Pattanam is in Kerala:** Pattanam (possible Muziris) is a Kerala site on the same trade route – not a Tamil Nadu site.
- **Dates of Tamil-Brahmi:** Kodumanal/Porunthal results – about 5th century BCE; Keeladi – 6th century BCE.
- **Carnelian and lapis lazuli are not local:** they came from outside Tamil Nadu; beryl and quartz were local.

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Quick Revision Table

Year / period	Event
About 5th–1st century BCE	Main occupation of the industrial-trade settlement
Sangam age	Kodumanam mentioned in Pathitrupathu (song 74, Arisil Kizhar)
1961	Megalithic burial site first reported
1985, 1986, 1989, 1990	Tamil University, Thanjavur excavations under Y. Subbarayalu
Late 1990s	State Department of Archaeology – further trenches and graves
2012	Pondicherry University excavation under K. Rajan – industrial complex, 130 Tamil-Brahmi sherds
2020	State Department of Archaeology (J. Ranjith) – about 250 cairn circles, cist burials
2021	New season – iron-smelting units, rubble-built well-like structure

TNPSC Key Points (PYQ-style facts)

- Kodumanal – Erode district, Perundurai taluk; northern bank of the Noyyal (tributary of the Kaveri); about 40 km south-west of Erode.
- Ancient name Kodumanam – Pathitrupathu (Ettuthogai, on Chera kings).
- On the Karur (Chera capital) – Muziris (Chera port) trade route.
- First systematic excavation 1985 – Tamil University, Thanjavur (Y. Subbarayalu).
- Pondicherry University 2012 – K. Rajan; TN State Department of Archaeology from 2020 – J. Ranjith.
- Industries: beads (beryl, quartz, sapphire, carnelian, agate, lapis lazuli), iron and steel, copper, shell bangles, textiles.
- Hundreds of Tamil-Brahmi inscribed potsherds (130 in 2012 alone); names Samban, Sumanan, Atan; north Indian name Visaki.
- Scientific dates from Kodumanal and Porunthal reported by K. Rajan – about 5th century BCE (debated).
- Megaliths: cairn circles, cists, urns, menhirs; about 250 cairn circles identified in 2020.
- Roman coins and rouletted ware; Roman coin hoards at Vellalore nearby.
- Kodumanal antiquities – Government Museum, Erode.

Frequently Asked Questions

Where is Kodumanal and why is it important for TNPSC?

Kodumanal is a village in Perundurai taluk of Erode district, on the northern bank of the Noyyal river, a tributary of the Kaveri, about 40 km south-west of Erode. It is identified with Kodumanam of the Sangam work Pathitrupathu and was an early-historic industrial and trade centre known for gemstone beads, iron and steel, and a large number of Tamil-Brahmi inscribed potsherds. Questions on its district, river, excavators and finds appear regularly in TNPSC papers.

Who excavated Kodumanal?

Tamil University, Thanjavur, with the University of Madras and the State Department of Archaeology, excavated it in four seasons between 1985 and 1990 under Y. Subbarayalu; the Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology excavated again in the late 1990s; Pondicherry University excavated it in 2012 under K. Rajan; and the Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology resumed excavation in 2020 and 2021 under J. Ranjith.

Which gemstones were worked at Kodumanal?

Beads were made of beryl, quartz, sapphire, carnelian, agate, jasper and lapis lazuli. Beryl and quartz were available in the region (the Kangeyam area nearby had an ancient beryl mine), while carnelian and lapis lazuli are not found in Tamil Nadu and had to be brought from far away – evidence of long-distance trade.

What do the Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions of Kodumanal tell us?

Hundreds of potsherds with Tamil-Brahmi writing have been found – 130 in the 2012 season alone – among the largest numbers from any site. They carry personal names such as Samban, Sumanan and Atan, along with north Indian (Prakrit/Sanskrit) names such as Visaki, which point to contact with northern India. They show that writing was used by ordinary people – traders and craftsmen – and scientific dates reported by K. Rajan from Kodumanal and Porunthal place early Tamil-Brahmi around the 5th century BCE, though some scholars dispute such early dates.

How was Kodumanal linked to Roman trade?

Kodumanal lay on the ancient route from Karur, the Chera capital, to the Chera port of Muziris (identified by many with Pattanam in Kerala). Roman coins and rouletted ware have been found at Kodumanal, Roman coin hoards were found at Vellalore on the same Noyyal route, and beryl from the Kangeyam region was exported to the Roman world.

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Practice questions

1. In which district is the Kodumanal archaeological site located?

A. Coimbatore
B. Karur
C. Erode
D. Dindigul

2. Kodumanal lies on the bank of which river?

A. Vaigai
B. Noyyal
C. Amaravathi
D. Thamirabarani

3. By what name is Kodumanal referred to in Sangam literature?

A. Kodumanam
B. Kodungallur
C. Karuvur
D. Korkai

4. Which Sangam work mentions Kodumanam?

A. Pattinappalai
B. Maduraikkanchi
C. Pathitrupathu
D. Sirupanatruppadai

5. Pathitrupathu sings the praise of which dynasty?

A. Cholas
B. Pandyas
C. Pallavas
D. Cheras

6. Which institution conducted the first systematic excavation at Kodumanal (1985)?

A. Archaeological Survey of India
B. Tamil University, Thanjavur
C. Madurai Kamaraj University
D. Pondicherry University

7. Who directed the Tamil University excavations at Kodumanal from 1985?

A. R. Nagaswamy
B. K. Rajan
C. Y. Subbarayalu
D. J. Ranjith

8. Who directed the Pondicherry University excavation at Kodumanal in 2012?

A. K. Rajan
B. Y. Subbarayalu
C. Amarnath Ramakrishna
D. Se. Rasu

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9. Which agency excavated Kodumanal from 2020?

A. Archaeological Survey of India
B. Pondicherry University
C. Kerala Council for Historical Research
D. Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology

10. Kodumanal lay on the ancient trade route linking which two places?

A. Madurai – Korkai
B. Karur – Muziris
C. Uraiyur – Puhar
D. Kanchi – Mamallapuram

11. Which of the following stones used for beads at Kodumanal does not occur in Tamil Nadu?

A. Beryl
B. Quartz
C. Lapis lazuli
D. All of these were local

12. Which area near Kodumanal had an ancient beryl mine whose beryl was exported to the Roman Empire?

A. Kangeyam
B. Porunthal
C. Keeladi
D. Adichanallur

13. The industrial complex exposed at Kodumanal in the 2012 excavation dates to about which century?

A. 4th century BCE
B. 4th century CE
C. 10th century BCE
D. 8th century CE

14. Which script is found on the inscribed potsherds of Kodumanal?

A. Kharosthi
B. Grantha
C. Tamil-Brahmi
D. Vatteluttu

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15. Which name was inscribed on the large pot found at Kodumanal in 2012?

A. Samban Sumanan

B. Kuviran Atan

C. Peruvazhuthi

D. Rajaraja

16. Which of the following statements on the Tamil-Brahmi sherds of Kodumanal is/are correct?

1. Most are personal names.

2. The 2012 season alone yielded 130 inscribed sherds.

3. All are royal orders.

A. 1 only

B. 1 and 2 only

C. 2 and 3 only

D. 1, 2 and 3

17. Scientific dates reported by K. Rajan from Kodumanal and Porunthal suggested what age for Tamil-Brahmi?

A. About the 5th century BCE

B. 3rd century CE

C. 10th century BCE

D. 6th century CE

18. About how many cairn circles were identified in the Kodumanal burial ground in the 2020 excavation?

A. 25

B. 100

C. 250

D. 1,000

19. Which of the following is NOT a burial type reported at Kodumanal?

A. Cairn circle

B. Cist

C. Urn burial

D. Brick stupa

20. Pots of grain placed in the Kodumanal burials indicate what?

A. Absence of agriculture

B. Belief in an afterlife

C. Roman rule

D. Jain religion

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21. Match: (a) Kodumanal (b) Keeladi (c) Adichanallur (d) Porunthal – 1. Sivaganga 2. Dindigul 3. Erode 4. Thoothukudi

A. 3 1 4 2
B. 1 3 2 4
C. 3 4 1 2
D. 4 1 3 2

22. Which place on the Noyyal route, like Kodumanal, is famous for Roman coin hoards?

A. Arikamedu
B. Vellalore
C. Alagankulam
D. Korkai

23. Which evidence of Roman contact has been found at Kodumanal?

A. Roman coins
B. Gupta gold coins
C. Chinese porcelain
D. Arabic inscription

24. In which museum are Kodumanal antiquities displayed?

A. Government Museum, Chennai
B. Thanjavur Art Gallery
C. Government Museum, Erode
D. Gandhi Memorial Museum, Madurai

25. Which of the following statements about Kodumanal is incorrect?

A. It lies on the northern bank of the Noyyal
B. There is evidence of copper smelting and shell-bangle making
C. Carnelian was available locally
D. There is evidence of textile production

Answers with explanations

1. **C) Erode** – Kodumanal is in Perundurai taluk of Erode district.
2. **B) Noyyal** – Kodumanal is on the northern bank of the Noyyal, a tributary of the Kaveri.
3. **A) Kodumanam** – The Kodumanam of Pathitrupathu is identified with present-day Kodumanal.
4. **C) Pathitrupathu** – Kodumanam is mentioned in Pathitrupathu, the Ettuthogai anthology on Chera kings.
5. **D) Cheras** – Pathitrupathu is devoted to the Chera kings.
6. **B) Tamil University, Thanjavur** – Tamil University, Thanjavur began systematic excavation in 1985.
7. **C) Y. Subbarayalu** – Y. Subbarayalu directed the Tamil University seasons.
8. **A) K. Rajan** – K. Rajan of Pondicherry University directed it.

9. **D) Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology** – The Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology, under J. Ranjith, excavated from 2020.

10. **B) Karur – Muziris** – It stood on the route from Karur, the Chera capital, to Muziris, the Chera port.

11. **C) Lapis lazuli** – Lapis lazuli is not found in Tamil Nadu; beryl and quartz were local.

12. **A) Kangeyam** – An ancient beryl mine near Kangeyam supplied beryl that was exported to the Roman Empire.

13. **A) 4th century BCE** – The 2012 excavation under K. Rajan exposed an industrial complex of about the 4th century BCE.

14. **C) Tamil-Brahmi** – The potsherds carry Tamil-Brahmi (Tamili) writing.

15. **A) Samban Sumanan** – The large pot found in 2012 carried the Tamil-Brahmi inscription "Samban Sumanan".

16. **B) 1 and 2 only** – Most are personal names and 130 inscribed sherds came from the 2012 season alone; they are not royal orders.

17. **A) About the 5th century BCE** – About the 5th century BCE; the Keeladi report (2019) later proposed the 6th century BCE.

18. **C) 250** – About 250 cairn circles were identified in 2020.

19. **D) Brick stupa** – Kodumanal has cairn circles, cists, urns and menhirs – not stupas.

20. **B) Belief in an afterlife** – Food placed with the dead shows belief in life after death.

21. **A) 3 1 4 2** – Kodumanal–Erode, Keeladi–Sivaganga, Adichanallur–Thoothukudi, Porunthal–Dindigul.

22. **B) Vellalore** – Vellalore near Coimbatore, on the Noyyal route, is known for Roman coin hoards.

23. **A) Roman coins** – Roman coins and rouletted ware have been found.

24. **C) Government Museum, Erode** – The Government Museum, Erode displays Kodumanal antiquities.

25. **C) Carnelian was available locally** – Carnelian does not occur in Tamil Nadu; it came from western India.

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